

# GAIN

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A COMPLETE SET OF GENTLEMEN.

this work would do well for readings in this country, so I wrote to her in care of her manager asking her what she would take for fifty choice dates in America, to read jointly with me, each of us to be supported by our own works. My idea was that my own selections would, as it were, give a solid and literary character to the entertainment, while her own would brighten up the evening with mirth and gladness.

Whether her majesty did not understand the meaning of the word "excerpt," and therefore cruelly misjudged my meaning, or was unable to obtain a chapter in time, I do not know, but suffice it to say that the royal fungus is growing rank on my still unanswered Billie De.

I saw a very and man yesterday on the cars as I rode west. There were scolding tears in every tone, and his chin quivered like a horse's lip. His name was Brown, he said, generally called Flamingo Brown, because of a long, wavy neck he had, which struck me as the longest, roughest sweep of undulating neck and aquiline Adam's apple that I had ever seen.

Flamingo Brown told me that he was on his way to Dwight, Ill., and in order to give the Keeley cure a good, honest trial he said he should enter the institution in a beastly state of intoxication. He had a pretty fair start already, and some of his longest words flew to my head in a very short time.

"I was not always thus," said Flamingo Brown, uncoiling his neck from around his scarpin and swallowing an imaginary dumbbell so that you could hear it in the next ear. Then he sobbed a little on the back of the seat, meantime feeling blindly about in his pockets for a handkerchief which he did not have. I felt sorry for him and gave him an extra which I wear in my overcoat pocket for both entirely. It is one I bought at the Bon Marche, in Paris, paying for it three francs and a poor boy. You cannot do anything in Paris without a poor boy. When I called on Carnot I sent in my card and a poor boy and never saw either of them again.

Flamingo Brown after awhile dried his tears in a measure, also in my new handkerchief, and then he told me his story. Possibly you, too, gentle reader, may care to hear it. He said:

"I was a temperance lecturer in Georgia all my early life. It was easy for me to be temperate, for I did not like rum, and so temperance with me was not a hardship. It was a good job. It was a pleasure and a profit. I can now say that I wasn't entitled to so much glory as I thought I was.

"Alas! I had an enemy—a rival, Mr. Nye—a gaudy young man who liked to take wine at times, and yet would not intentionally had. He seemed, however, to resent my current work in the temperance field because, he said, I knew nothing about intemperance except what I had read in books, and so oftentimes he told me I ought to keep off the grass and talk about things upon which I was informed, if such a thing could be found through the want columns of the paper.

"We also loved the same sweet, sweet girl. She wavered. She seemed to enjoy wavering. It gave her a good deal of attention and quiet summer evenings and happy rides over the sea.

"In an unguarded moment I tried to do up my rival by poisoning her heart and telling her in the most and liberal view regarding the use of champagne for medicinal purposes. He heard about it. I might have known that he would. But he only told me about it and did not offer to fight, as I feared he would. He was not of the fighting kind. He was going away soon, and so he said we would part friendly. We would go up to Ella's and spend the evening and eat a watermelon with her before he went away, perhaps forever.

"We did eat watermelon. I am especially fond of watermelon. Georgia has all the watermelons. I only remember eating the third piece of this special melon, and then at twilight came to Ella's father's man with a full bowl of watermelon which he was very proud and which saved his right elbow a year in machine. I just dimly remember taking half a melon and dumping it in his hand, then and there with it. Why

I did it I know not. It was not like me at all.

"I knew no more till the next day. I woke up with a sense of shame, and my head, which had always before been perfectly free from everything, pained me a good deal and seemed to just cut over my ears like a bandage.

"A policeman said that the hair of the dog would sometimes cure the bite, and so I took for the first time what is called a cocktail. It worked like magic. I took yet another.

"I neglected my temperance work and gave myself up to curing the bite by means of the hair of the dog. When I got by the house now Ella's children laugh at me and jeer me, and their papa, who invited me to the watermelon debauch, does not chide them.

"What was in that watermelon I do not know, but it was good. In Georgia they have a way of threading a string through the curl of a watermelon as it grows on the vines. Then they put the end of the string into a bottle of spirits. This they call 'feeding' a watermelon. The melon knows when it has got enough, and so does not become bolder; but say, if you think it does not act on the cerebral tissues of a fresh young being like I was, you do not know so much as one would think to see you with your hat off.

"Write to me while I am at Dwight. I shall be lonely, no doubt. Send me some of your pieces. I shall be glad to read most anything. Address Flamingo Brown, Dwight, Ill."

He then called his dog and without other luggage got off at Dwight, Ill.

*Bill Nye*

The Best Authorities.

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Cash or on easy payments.	
Decorated Toilet Sets, nine pieces, latest styles, cash or on easy payments.	\$2.75
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